

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) Method for manufacturing a ball for a ball game, said ball comprising:
 - (a) a bladder including a valve for introducing air into said bladder;
 - (b) a fabric layer located on ~~the~~ an outer surface of said bladder comprising a plurality of fabric pieces,
wherein each of said plurality of fabric pieces has marginal edges which are folded inwardly,
wherein said marginal edges of adjacent fabric pieces are sewn together with a sewing machine, so that said plurality of fabric pieces are joined to have a spherical shape,
wherein a valve opening is formed in a first one of said plurality of fabric pieces, and a hole for reversing said fabric layer and for accommodating said bladder is formed in a second one of said plurality of fabric pieces wherein the second one of said plurality of fabric pieces is located opposite the first one of said plurality of fabric pieces; and
 - (c) a skin layer located on ~~the~~ an outer surface of said fabric layer, said skin layer comprising a plurality of panels;
said method comprising the steps of:
 - (i) forming the fabric layer by superposing two adjacent fabric pieces, sewing along a marginal edge of the superimposed fabric pieces with a sewing machine, locating said marginal edge on the outer side of the fabric layer and repeating until all fabric pieces are joined to form a spherical fabric layer;
 - (ii) reversing said fabric layer through said hole to locate said marginal edges on an inner side of the fabric layer;
 - (iii) inserting said bladder into the fabric layer through said hole within said fabric layer;
 - (iv) closing said hole; and
 - (v) forming said skin layer on ~~an~~ the outer surface of said fabric layer.

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a patch is abutted onto a peripheral part of said hole, and said patch is adhered to said second one of said fabric pieces whereby said hole is closed.
3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a patch is abutted onto a peripheral part of said hole, said patch is sewn to said second one of said fabric pieces with a sewing machine through said valve opening formed in said fabric layer.
4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a patch is abutted onto a peripheral part of said hole, said patch is sewn to said second one of said fabric pieces by hand stitching.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said hole comprises two slits, which perpendicularly bisect each other, said slits having a minimum length of 20mm.
6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said hole comprises two slits, which perpendicularly bisect each other, said slits having a maximum length which is determined by ~~the~~ a distance from ~~the~~ ends of said slits to ~~the~~ peripheral edges of said second one of said fabric pieces being at least 10mm.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said hole is closed through said valve opening using a sewing machine.
8. (Currently amended) The method of ~~any one of claim[s] 1 to 7~~, wherein said fabric layer comprises twelve right pentagonal fabric pieces.
9. (Currently amended) The method of ~~any one of claim[s] 1 to 8~~, wherein each of said fabric pieces comprises two fabric layers laminated to each other, whereby ~~the~~ a warp direction of ~~the~~ a first fabric layer is perpendicular to ~~the~~ a warp direction of ~~the~~ a second fabric layer.
10. (Currently amended) The method of ~~any one of claim[s] 1 to 9~~, wherein each of said plurality of panels comprises a surface layer and a shock absorbing layer adhered to a rear surface of said surface layer, wherein marginal edges of said surface layer are inwardly turned by 90 degrees, whereby ~~the~~ side surfaces of said shock absorbing layer are covered with said inwardly turned marginal edges, and wherein said panels are adhered to said fabric layer with adhesive.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein an inwardly turned marginal edge of one of said plurality of panels is adhered to an inwardly turned edge of an adjacent panel with adhesive.

12. (Currently amended) The method of ~~any one of claim[s] 1 to 9~~, wherein said skin layer is formed by superposing two adjacent panels, sewing the marginal edges of said superimposed panels together, opening out the superimposed panels in such a manner that said marginal edges are located on an inner side of the skin layer and repeating until all the panels are joined to form a spherical skin layer.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein said skin layer is adhered to said fabric layer with adhesive.

14. (Currently amended) Method for manufacturing a ball for a ball game, said ball comprising:

(a) a bladder including a valve for introducing air into said bladder;

(b) a fabric layer located on ~~the~~ an outer surface of said bladder comprising a plurality of fabric pieces,

wherein each of said plurality of fabric pieces has marginal edges which are folded inwardly,

wherein said marginal edges of adjacent fabric pieces are sewn together with a sewing machine, so that said plurality of fabric pieces are joined to form a spherical shape; and

(c) a skin layer located on ~~the~~ an outer surface of said fabric layer, said skin layer comprising a plurality of panels;

said method comprising the steps of:

(i) forming a hole in one of said plurality of fabric pieces;

(ii) superimposing two adjacent fabric pieces, sewing along a marginal edge of the superimposed fabric pieces with a sewing machine, locating all of said marginal edges on an outer side of the fabric layer and repeating until all fabric pieces are joined to form a spherical fabric layer;

(iii) reversing said fabric layer through said hole, and locating all of said marginal edges on ~~the~~ an inner side of the fabric layer,;

(iv) inserting said bladder into the fabric layer through said hole;

(v) abutting a patch on said hole from the inner side of said fabric layer to close said hole;

and

(vi) forming said skin layer on the outer surface of said fabric layer.

15. (Currently amended) Ball for ball game comprising:

a bladder including a valve for introducing air into said bladder;

a fabric layer located on ~~the~~ an outer surface of said bladder; and

a skin layer located on ~~the~~ an outer surface of said fabric layer, said skin layer comprising a plurality of panels;

wherein said fabric layer comprises a plurality of fabric pieces which are connected to each other to form a spherical shape;

wherein all parts of the fabric layer which prevent said fabric layer from forming a spherical shape are located on the inner side of said fabric layer, said parts being formed as a result of connecting said plurality of fabric pieces to each other;

wherein said parts which prevent said fabric layer from forming a spherical shape are absorbed by deformation of the bladder, whereby the outer surface of said fabric layer has a complete spherical shape, such that ~~the~~ a spherical shape of ~~the~~ an outer surface of said skin layer is maintained.